In the Claims

1-34   (cancelled)

35.   (new)   A method of conferencing comprising the steps of:
forming a main conference between a plurality of users,
presenting at least one of said users in the main conference with a graphical list of the main conference participants,
providing said user with an interface to interact with said graphical list of main conference participants, such that said user has an option to request a subconference with a subset of other users by selecting subconference participants from said graphical list using said interface,
forming a subconference between said user and the subset of other users,
maintaining private from the main conference at least some communication between the subset of users in the subconference during the subsistence of the subconference, and
presenting to said user a graphical list of the subset of users in the subconference, when the subconference is in progress.

36.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein those users in the subconference are entirely isolated from participation in the main conference during the subsistence of the subconference.

37.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the users in the subconference are prevented from contributing to the main conference but are able to monitor communications in the main conference during the subsistence of the subconference.

38.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the main conference utilises a plurality of media types, users in the subconference utilise one or more of said media types, and users in the subconference can actively or passively participate in the main conference in at least one media type during the subsistence of the subconference.

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39.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the users utilise a plurality of media types in the main conference and/or subconference, said media types being selected from the group consisting of video, audio and data signals.

40.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 39, wherein the media types utilised in the main conference include video and audio, and wherein the subconference utilises audio signals.

41.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 39, wherein the media types utilised in the main conference include audio and data, and wherein the subconference utilises data signals.

42.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the users in the main conference are presented with said subconference list during the subsistence of the subconference.

43.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the users in the main conference are not presented with said subconference list during the subsistence of the subconference.

44.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the main conference is formed on a conference bridge to which each of the main conference users is connected.

45.   (New) A method according of conferencing to claim 44, wherein the subconference users remain connected to the bridge and the subconference is formed by creating a second conference on the bridge simultaneously with the main conference.

46.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein the user(s) to whom the request is addressed have the option of accepting or refusing to join the

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subconference, and wherein such acceptance or rejection determines whether or not they remain as part of said subset.

47.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein each user in the subconference is provided with the option to leave the subconference at any time during the subsistence of the subconference.

48.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 47, wherein users opting to leave the subconference are automatically returned to full participation in the main conference.

49.   (New) A method of conferencing according to claim 35, wherein users in the subconference are presented with the option of requesting one or more of the other subconference users to join a nested subconference within said initial subconference.

50.   (New) A method according to claim 35, wherein users in the subconference are presented with the option of requesting one or more of the other subconference users to leave said initial subconference and form a new subconference without rejoining the main conference.

51.   (New) A conferencing server comprising:

i)   a main conference list memory unit for maintaining a main list of the users connected to the server as part of a conference,

ii)   a main conference list manager for forwarding said main list of users to an endpoint of at least one of said users whereby said endpoint can graphically display said main list to said user,

iii)   main signal processing means for receiving incoming signals from said users, processing said signals and generating outgoing signals to said users,

iv)   a main control unit for controlling said main conference list memory unit and said main signal processing means,

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v) a subconference list memory unit for maintaining a subconference list of a subset of said users, said subset being defined in response to subconference requests made by said user by interaction with said main list at said endpoint,

vi) a subconference list manager for forwarding said subconference list of users to said endpoint of said at least one user whereby said endpoint can graphically display said subconference list to said user,

vii) subconference signal processing means for generating outgoing signals to said subset of users, wherein the signals generated by said subconference signal processing means include subconference signals which are not included in the signals generated by said main signal processing means and sent to users outside said subset, and

viii) a subconference control unit for controlling said subconference list memory unit and said subconference signal processing means.

52. (New) A conferencing server according to claim 51 wherein the main conference list memory unit and the subconference list memory unit are logical areas within a single memory unit.

53. (New) A conferencing server according to claim 51 wherein the functions of the main signal processing means and of the subconference signal processing means are carried out by the same signal processing unit.

54. (New) A conferencing server according to claim 53, wherein said signal processing unit is adapted to combine signals of different media types.

55. (New) A conferencing server according to claim 54, wherein said media types are selected from video, audio and data.

56. (New) A conferencing server according to claim 55, wherein said signal processing unit is dynamically programmable to generate outgoing signal streams containing an arbitrary combination of media types selected from the incoming signals from the users.

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57.   (New) A conferencing server according to claim 51, wherein said main control unit includes means for forwarding said list of users in the conference to each of the users.

58.   (New) A conferencing server according to claim 51, wherein said subconference control unit includes means for forwarding said list of said subset of users to said subset of users, and optionally to all users on the list maintained in the main conference list memory unit.

59.   (New) A conferencing system comprising a conferencing server according to claim 51, a call server connected to the conferencing server, and means for connecting users to the call server.

60.   (New) A computer program product comprising software in machine readable form for managing a conference, said software comprising instructions which when executed in a conferencing system are effective to cause the system to:
        form a main conference between a plurality of users,
        present at least one of said users in the main conference with a graphical list of the main conference participants,
        provide said user with an interface to interact with said graphical list of main conference participants, such that said user has an option to request a subconference with a subset of other users by selecting subconference participants from said graphical list using said interface,
        form a subconference between said user and the subset of other users,
        maintain private from the main conference at least some communication between the subset of users in the subconference during the subsistence of the subconference, and
        present to said user a graphical list of the subset of users in the subconference, when the subconference is in progress

61.   (New) A computer program product according to claim 60, wherein said main conference is conducted in a plurality of media and wherein said means for providing

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a participant with an option to request a subconference includes means for enabling said participant to select one or more of said media for use during said subconference.

62.   (New) A computer program product comprising software in machine readable form for enabling a user at a multimedia terminal to participate in a conference over a network, said software comprising instructions which when executed in said terminal are effective to cause the terminal to:

present to said user a graphical list of participants in the conference,

provide said user with an interface to interact with said graphical list of conference participants, such that said user has an option to request a subconference with a subset of other users by selecting subconference participants from said graphical list using said interface,

forward said request over the network from said terminal, and

on initiation of a subconference with one or more of said subset of users, present to said user a graphical list of the subset of users in the subconference, when the subconference is in progress.

63.   (New) A computer program product according to claim 62, further comprising means for enabling the user to select one or more media types for use during said subconference.

64.   (New) A computer program product according to claim 62, when embodied in a multimedia terminal for use in a conference.

65.   (New) A computer program product according to claim 62, when embodied in the form of a telephone handset having a graphical display for presentation of said graphical list and input means for operation of said interface.

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